

## Red Cross emergency services director lauds U.S. military volunteers for service

By Master Sgt. Will Ackerman  
8th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The American Red Cross Armed Forces Emergency Services senior director thanked volunteers for their selflessness and visited wing leadership here Monday to ensure the organization's services meet Kunsan Air Base needs.

Kay Walton said more than 40,000 military members and their families who volunteer form the backbone of the ARC's ability to provide services to the U.S. armed forces. Volunteer services include teaching Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, first aid, swimming and other health and safety skills.

Walton said without volunteers, the Red Cross couldn't provide the services it does today.

"If we didn't have the volunteers, we wouldn't be able to provide the health and safety training," she said. The 40,000 volunteers at military bases equates to \$59 million a year in compensation. "Neither the military nor the Red Cross could afford to pay that amount of money."

In addition to teaching health and safety, the Red Cross depends on volunteers to collect and donate blood. In fact, half the nation's blood supply - six million pints annually - is collected by more than 190,000 Red Cross volunteers, according to its Web site. However, less than 5 percent of people who are eligible to donate do, Walton said.

What's more, Walton said the Red Cross needs military members to donate blood more today because it expects to

see up to an 8 percent reduction in blood donations because of concerns over exposure to Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, better known as "Mad Cow Disease." Anyone who

spent a cumulative time of six months or more in the United Kingdom during 1980 to 1996 must defer giving blood indefinitely. (See related story, Page 4.)

Walton also met with 8th Fighter Wing leadership to ensure the Red Cross Emergency Services here were adequate.

The Red Cross traces its legacy of service to the U.S. military to its founder, Clara Barton, who risked her life on the battlefields in the mid-1800s during the American Civil War. After Barton led a group of nurses to Cuba to care for U.S. servicemembers in the Spanish-American War in 1898, Congress then chartered the Red Cross to provide emergency communication services for armed forces members.

And, today, the Red Cross provides services to military installations wherever the U.S. military is, Walton said. An important service is emergency communication between family members and the servicemember when a serious illness, injury or death occurs in the immediate family.

"The real client of the American Red



Kay Walton

Cross is you - the servicemember, serving your country in an isolated area or overseas forwardly deployed," Walton said. "The (servicemember's) family comes to us asking us to share information with you, the servicemember." Then, the servicemember and his or her commander use the information to make a decision whether the servicemember returns home during the crises.

In 1999, emergency communication was provided to more than 475,000 servicemembers and their families.

The Red Cross also helps members with emergency financial services. It entered into a partnership with the military aid societies about four years ago, combining their strengths to bring a better service to military members who need emergency financial aid, Walton said.

"The aid societies have the financial ability to provide loans and grants ... but they don't always have offices on every military installation," she said. "The American Red Cross, however, has the network of people who can reach out and touch service men and women wherever they are at."

Help includes interest-free loans or grants for emergency travel expenses during a servicemember's personal or family crises, based on need. Through this partnership, the program assisted 12,781 servicemembers and their families with \$9.3 million in 1999.

For more information about volunteering or Red Cross services, visit its Web site at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org), or call Roland Born, Red Cross station manager, at 782-4601.

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demand for Air Force people in the civilian workforce.

"They are excellent workers, they are disciplined, they are drug-free," Ryan said. "They are family people who know how to lead and how to follow and industry wants them. (We have to) make sure we provide the quality of service and the quality of life to keep them here."

Most Air Force members love what they do, Ryan said.

They love the camaraderie

and appreciate the challenge of the mission. "But their ultimate concern is for their families. We have to continue to work on driving the equitability of pay with the civilian counterparts. People should not be penalized for serving their country."

Ryan is also concerned about Civil Servants. They have been a vital part of the Air Force since its beginning. With more than 40 percent of the civilian work force eligible to retire in the next few years, the Air Force could

face a shortage of experience and skills.

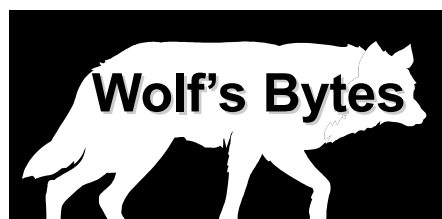
"Even though a great number will be eligible, not all will choose to leave when they reach that point. Many will stay on with us," Ryan said. "We have asked Congress for help in trying to shape the force. That is, to bring in more younger people to balance our experience levels, and to be able to give incentives to our folks who want to retire."

"We have a wonderfully dedicated civilian work-

force," Ryan said. "They are part of our team; they are Air Force. But we have to ensure that we are balanced so that it is a stable career for civilians."

Relief is in sight for military construction, he said.

"For the past four years we have under funded MILCON and modernization to take care of families and readiness," Ryan said. "We've had to defer modernization of our infrastructure." He said he believes that will be a priority of this administration and Congress.



Over the past week, I've had the chance to speak to many of you in person during my commander's calls. Interestingly enough, there were some questions about Monday's no-notice recall.

For those who couldn't attend the commander's calls let me share my feelings about exercises and readiness. My goal for Kunsan Air Base during my command is for it to be the best wing in the Air Force at generating and employing combat power. Our combat capability is directly related to how we train. I won't say exactly how many more no-notice exercises we'll have, but given our mission, we must always be prepared to carry them out.

I had some questions on how a Unit Compliance Inspection next year, instead of an Operational Readiness Inspection, might affect our training schedule. While it's true that a UCI is a paperwork inspection, the Wolf Pack never has or will not train toward anything other than Defending the Base, Accepting Follow-on Forces and Taking the Fight North. When we do our mission and write down exactly how we're accomplishing it, we'll come out on top of any type of inspection.

On another note, I want to remind everyone that although you may be far from home and loved ones, there is not a lack of things to do around Kunsan. The 8th Services Squadron has enough going on to keep the Wolf Pack busy, no matter what your fancy, whether it's intramural sports, tours around the peninsula or entertainers at the club.

Each month, 8th SVS puts out a publication called the Wolf's Pause that highlights all of the tours, tournaments, games, trips and everything else going on around the base.

If you're new to the Pack, or haven't gone downtown yet, I highly suggest that you take the Kunsan City walking tour given by the Family Support Center. It's a great way to learn both how to get downtown and where to find some of the popular places to eat, shop or mingle with our neighbors. Lydia Hughes offers the tours every Friday afternoon. She can be reached at 782-5627.

May God have mercy on the Wolf Pack's prey.



Tech. Sgt.  
Laura Lee Chandler



## Pride of the Pack

**Job:** NCO-in-charge, Medical Logistics Flight

**Hometown:** Terry, Mont.

**Follow-on:** USAF Academy

**Family:** Husband, Edwin

**Hobbies:** Spending time with family and friends, reading and gardening

*Nominees are selected for outstanding service and dedication to their unit. To nominate an individual, contact the member's group commander.*